

\$4.95

DESIGN • ARCHITECTURE • DECOR

SPRING 2010

HOME

SASKATOON

INSIDE:

**SIMPLIFY YOUR HOME FOR SPRING
RE-ORGANIZE EVERY ROOM**



HunterDouglas
Gallery



BRAID
Flooring & Window Fashions

#1-2301 Millar Avenue
Saskatoon, SK
Ph: 306-244-1973

www.braidflooring.com

Great things come in threes.

Enhance your home with Duette® Architella®, the next generation of honeycomb shades. From January 1st to April 30th 2010, purchase a minimum of three Duette® Architella® and earn 1,000 Aeroplan® Miles per unit!

aeroplan

3,000 AEROPLAN MILES

© Aeroplan is a registered trademark of Aeroplan Canada Inc.

INSIDE

- 19 Simplify Your Home for Spring**
An organized home helps an organized life.
- 21 Room by Room**
Streamlining and de-cluttering tips to do right now.
- 25 Taming the Chaotic House**
Our professional panel shares techniques for taking charge of your messy home.
- 30 From Bland to Grand**
A home designer transforms a blah basement into a hoorah(!) multi-use space.



- 7 FRONTLINES**
Vital News for Homeowners
Awards, home sales, building stats, development news.
- 13 PROFILE**
Cleaning Service
How one family started a help-at-home company.
Top spring cleaning tips from another enterprise.
- 15 SPOTLIGHT**
Organized Home
Clear kitchen, ample storage and even a Saskatoon-friendly mud room.
- 34 DECOR**
Lean, Spacious and Clean
Spare, contemporary furnishings add sophistication to a residence.
- 37 SUPPLIERS**
Civilizing the Chaotic Closet
Systems you can use to put your wardrobe in order.
- 39 GREEN**
Eco-friendly Nursery
Start baby out with a sustainable footprint.
- 41 OUTSIDE**
Low-Water Landscaping
Use xeriscape techniques for an attractive, environmentally-sensible yard.
- 43 BACKWORDS**
Montgomery Place
Since World War 2, this Saskatoon suburb has evolved from humble to "hot."

COVER:

The home of Cathy and Marty Edwards. Photo: Courtesy of Cathy and Marty Edwards.

Ode to the Orderly Home

As I walk through my house, I feel a sense of peace. My gaze sweeps smoothly around the living room, where the few pieces of well-chosen furniture are strategically placed, as are the paintings and the carefully-selected objets d'art. The hallways are clear of chairs and other furniture that might stumbled into at night. The bathrooms are almost as uncluttered as those you would find in a pleasant hotel room. The bedrooms are similarly spare, making them relaxing rather than stimulating. My office is so

organized, it is a pleasure to work in it, and I know where everything is. The coffee table in the reading nook is completely clear of newspapers, magazines and mail. Even the kitchen is devoid of appliances and knick-knacks on the counters. Items in cupboards and shelves are complete organized by category.

What happened? With the help of my son, a naturally minimal and organized person, we purged our home of everything we did not like, need or that held no particular sentiment or purpose, by donating or selling it.

He walked around the house and pointed to things, asking me what I felt about them and if I really needed them. We replaced worn-out items and fixed those in need of repair. We set up organized shelving in all the closets and storage rooms to classify clutter.

The benefits of de-cluttering and organizing a home are astonishing. Not only does your living space look and feel larger, cleaner and calmer, but your mood lifts and your thinking clears. You know the saying about a cluttered room reflecting a cluttered mind. You also have time for the rest of your life when you don't have to spend time looking for things.

This spring issue of Saskatoon Home is dedicated to helping you organize and de-clutter every room in your home. We've gathered tips and techniques from some of the city's top home organizing professionals and suppliers of systems that help put everything in its place. We take you inside some Saskatoon residences where order and simplicity reign.

We thank our advertisers who make Saskatoon Home possible. Please take advantage of their products and professional services to help make your home as organized and ideal as it can be.

- DONA STURMANIS

Editor, Saskatoon Home

HOME

Issue 8, Winter 2009
ISSN 1916-2324
info@saskatoon-home.ca

Publisher:

Amanda Souloandre

Editor, Writer:

Dona Sturmanis

Contributing Writer,

Photographer:

Darrell Noakes

Art Director:

Mark McCann

Associate Art Director:

Stephanie Symons

Contributors:

Tamara Bowman

Colleen Gnyg

Gail Jansen

Jeff O'Brien

Karin Melberg Schwier

Saskatoon Home is published by:
Farmhouse Communications

607 Waters Crescent,
Saskatoon SK S7W 0A4
Telephone: 306-373-1833
Fax: 306-979-8955
www.saskatoon-home.ca

FARMHOUSE
communications

Correction:

On page 17 of the winter issue, the photo was courtesy of Centennial Heating, Plumbing & Electrical.

No part of this publication may be copied or reprinted without the written consent of the publisher.

Publications Mail Agreement #
41856031



You can tell it's the best paint even with your eyes closed.

Feel its hand-rubbed finish. Notice the low odour. And finally, see its beautiful rich colour. Come discover your Aura today.

Benjamin Moore
benjaminmoore.ca

Eastside Paint & Wallpaper

1201A Walpole Avenue #1, 406 Ludlow Street - Erindale
477-5555 374-8888

Our staff would be happy to answer any questions you may have.
Ask for Ken, Barry, Darcy, Kym, Dylan, Trista, Deb or Lorraine.

©2009 Benjamin Moore & Co., Limited. Aura, Benjamin Moore and the triangle "BM" symbol are registered trademarks, licensed to Benjamin Moore & Co., Limited.



YOUR DREAM KITCHEN, NOW UP TO **\$2,500** LESS.

LIMITED-TIME OFFER. COME IN TODAY.

CHOOSE



Any full-size
built-in*,
integrated, or
PRO 48
refrigeration

AND

Any
size range
(gas or
dual fuel)



OR



Any size
wall oven
plus any size
rangetop or 30"
or 36" cooktop

GET

\$1,000 INSTANT SAVINGS

PLUS

\$1,500 INSTANT SAVINGS

WHEN YOU BUY UP TO SIX MORE PRODUCTS.

\$250 SAVINGS ON EACH.**

MIDTOWN APPLIANCE WORLD
2211 First Avenue, Saskatoon
306-242-8363
midtownappliance.com

SASKATOON APPLIANCES
#3 2720 8th Street, East, Saskatoon
306-955-1444
saskatoonappliance.com

FOR FURTHER DETAILS, VISIT SUBZEROSAVINGS.COM

This Sub-Zero, Inc. and Wolf Appliance, Inc. Instant Savings offer is valid beginning March 1, 2010, and expires after September 30, 2010, at participating Sub-Zero and Wolf dealers in the United States and Canada. This Instant Savings will be applied at point of sale only for qualifying purchases. All appliances must be purchased and invoiced at the same time, appear on the same invoice, and be delivered by December 31, 2010. Products must be delivered and installed in the country of purchase. The Instant Savings offer cannot be combined with any other offers. Check with your local dealer for details or visit subzerosavings.com

*Sub-Zero built-in 600 Series excluded. **Applicable to all products excluding Sub-Zero built-in 600 Series, Wolf microwave ovens, and all accessories.

Manos
Restaurant & Lounge

*2009 Premier's Awards
for Excellence
in Design*

www.manos.ca | T 955.5555
200 -1820 8th Str E | Saskatoon SK

The best of
Saskatchewan design

My Future, My Security, My Heritage RESP

With Heritage, you get one of the safest and best performing investments available, and that's what you need when you're saving for your child's future post-secondary education.



Securing Your Child's Future Since 1965



Get up to
\$7,200 in
government
education
grants*

Find out more, call Christie Sondergaard at

306.290.6986
HeritageRESP.com

*Certain conditions apply. Heritage Education Funds RESP's are offered by Prospectus only. Heritage Education Funds is the trade name of Heritage Education Funds Inc.

FRONTLINES

Hudson Bay Loft: Conversion Shortlisted for Prestigious Award

2nd Avenue Lofts, developed by Dub Architects, was one of six projects short listed worldwide in the World Architecture News (WAN) Residential Awards. The annual international awards are presented by the world's leading supplier of news to the global architectural

community. The conversion of the former Hudson Bay department store in downtown Saskatoon was the only North American entry remaining in competition when the short list was announced February 2. The winner, announced February 9, was Leisure Farm Villas in Malaysia.

The WAN praised Dub Architects for retaining the existing 1960s construction while turning the building into 130 two-storey, modern, affordable residential lofts.

"The project addresses

three important local architectural issues of the coming decades: the sustainable adaptation of buildings built in Canada during the booming 60s and 70s; the residential revitalization of the central cores of our cities; and the need for an alternative housing form for young adults on modest incomes," WAN wrote.

The nomination commended the architects for their sustainability perspective, in particular, for retaining almost the entire 1960 building, for reusing lime-

stone and brick removed for the windows, and for recycling concrete removed for the atrium and basement ramp.

WORLD ARCHITECTURE NEWS

January Home Sale Numbers Softened Slightly From January 2009

January real estate sales dropped 16 per cent from a

*Our Showroom
is Your Showroom*

You will be taken care of from the moment you walk into one of our showrooms. Our knowledgeable consultants will give you personalized service and advice while choosing from a vast selection of Kitchen & Bath fixtures. From enduring traditional classics to sleek modern contemporary styles and eco friendly - We Have Something for Everyone.

Prepare to be inspired by stepping into one of our showrooms and see the endless possibilities that await you.

16 Showrooms to Serve you

Kitchen & Bath
CLASSICS

a WOLSELEY company



Riobel
riobel.ca

REGINA
1176 Hamilton Street
306.565.2284

SASKATOON
649-51 Street East
306.933.2237

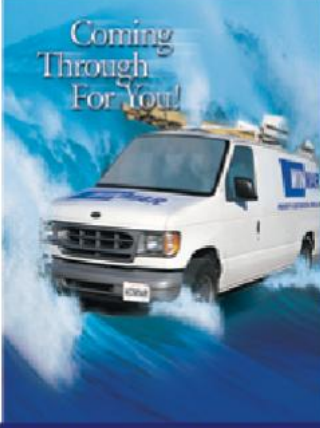


24 HOUR EMERGENCY SERVICE

WINMAR®  

Property Restoration Specialists

- Water Extraction
- Smoke & Fire Restoration
- Sewer Back-up
- Structural Drying
- Odour Control
- Restoration Services
- Mould Remediation





SASKATOON'S RESTORATION EXPERTS
306-956-0000

www.winmar.ca

year earlier, the Saskatoon Region Association of Realtors® said in a February news release. There were 179 homes sold in January, compared with 212 in January, 2009. The average selling price of \$270,191 was down 3 per cent from \$278,939 the previous January. The association attributed the decline to increased sales in the \$250,000 to \$275,000 price range. This price range had the highest number of unit sales in January, the association said.

The average residential price is derived by taking the month's dollar volume of homes sold and dividing that number by the unit sales number.

The inventory of homes on the market also declined. Real estate agents listed 394 residential properties in January, 23 per cent below the January, 2009, when 512 properties were listed. In total, 736 homes were on the market at the end of January, compared to 1156 the previous year. January's number rose slightly from December, 2009, when 703 properties were available for purchase.

"The residential dollar volume of \$48,364,000.00 was down 18 per cent due to lower sales numbers and increased activity in the mid price range of homes," the association said. "Dollar volume is expected to increase significantly as the year 2010 progresses."

In contrast to real estate sales in the city, in the areas surrounding Saskatoon, the market rose 17 per cent, with 34 units sold in January, compared with 29 units a year earlier. The average selling price was \$214,976, up 5 per cent from a Janu-

ary, 2009, price of \$204,166. January dollar volume was \$7,309,200, an increase of 23 per cent from the previous year.

On average, it took 38 days to sell a house in January within the city limits and 59 days in surrounding areas.

"The real estate market is expected to remain steady for the first quarter of this year," the association said. "Consumer confidence remains high, interest rates are low, all contributing to a healthy real estate market."

SASKATOON ASSOCIATION
OF REALTORS

Activity Picks Up Provincially in Urban Housing Construction

Residential construction in Saskatchewan cities picked up steam in January and recorded a 275 per cent increase over January of 2009.

According to a report released by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), Saskatchewan ranked first among Canadian provinces in terms of percentage increase over last January. Nationally, urban housing starts were up by 40 per cent between January 2009 and January 2010.

"This is an extraordinary turn around from last year, and marks a positive start for the construction industry this year," Enterprise Saskatchewan minister Ken Cheveldayoff said. "There is a rejuvenated sense of optimism in Saskatchewan this year that translates into a higher confidence level for both consumers and business."

**Where
Home
Innovation
Begins...**



 **Renovation & Design Services**
 710 - 51st Street East, Saskatoon
 (306)222.8466
 centennialplumbing.com

 **Business of the
Year 2009**

Uniquely designed custom condos. Elegant and refined living.



#116 - 918 Heritage View, Saskatoon - 306-242-2434

**North
Ridge**
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



David Leatherdale

SHOWSUITE HOURS

Mon.-Thurs. 2-4pm & 7-9pm
Fri., Sat., Sun. & Holidays 1-5pm
Or by appointment by calling 281-8029

**Kingswood
Manor**

www.kingswoodmanor.ca

Slade Desrochers
306-222-9992

#1 in the world amongst 13,000
Realty Executives agents
for homes **SOLD.**

www.therealtyconsultant.ca



**The Realty
Consultant™**

Realty Executives Saskatoon

The report also indicates that housing starts were up 388 per cent in Saskatoon and 276 per cent in Regina last month when compared with January 2009.

ENTERPRISE SASKATCHEWAN

Building Permits Ended on Positive Note in 2009

Building permit statistics for December 2009 released by Statistics Canada indicate that Saskatchewan had the highest monthly percentage increase among the provinces on a seasonally adjusted basis.

Building permits increased by 21.7 per cent between November 2009 and December 2009 in Saskatchewan, the highest increase

in the nation and well above the 2.4 per cent posted on a national front.

"The jump in permits at the end of 2009 is definitely encouraging, and will be important in boosting confidence for business and future investment," Enterprise Saskatchewan Minister Ken Cheveldayoff said. "The positive numbers for construction exceed our expectations for what turned out to be an excellent year for the Saskatchewan economy."

For December 2009, building permits in the province totaled \$150.6 million, a 21.7 per cent increase over November 2009, and the highest percentage increase among the provinces on a seasonally adjusted basis.

On a seasonally unadjusted basis, Saskatchewan's December building permits were up 19.2 per cent in

December 2009 compared to December 2008, fourth among the provinces.

Annually, Saskatchewan's building permits dropped by 13.7 per cent when comparing 2009 and 2008 (seasonally unadjusted). Only Nova Scotia and New Brunswick had an increase in permits on an annual basis. Nationally building permits were down 13.4 per cent for 2009.

"The improvement in the last month allows us to look back at 2009 as a positive year, where we set records for population, job numbers and average weekly earnings," Cheveldayoff said. "What it boils down to is we have more people, more opportunity and more economic activity that creates a better quality of life for Saskatchewan people."

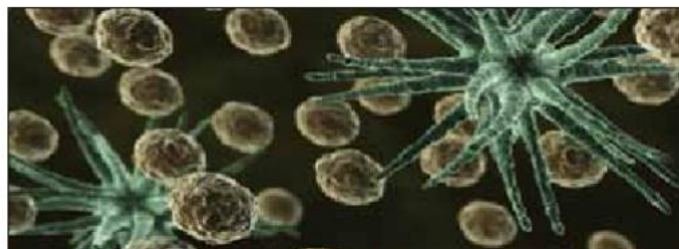
ENTERPRISE SASKATCHEWAN

Ambitious Broadway District Plan Unveiled — Central Avenue Could Be Next

Nearly two years after commissioning a report on the future of Broadway, residents and business owners got their first glimpse of the Broadway 360o Development Plan at a civic open house in January.

The report, by Toronto-based urban planner Harold Madi, outlined 10 "Big Ideas" for preserving and improving the district.

There was strong community interest in the plan, said Alan Wallace, the city's manager of neighbourhood planning.



Rid Your Home of Airborne Allergens

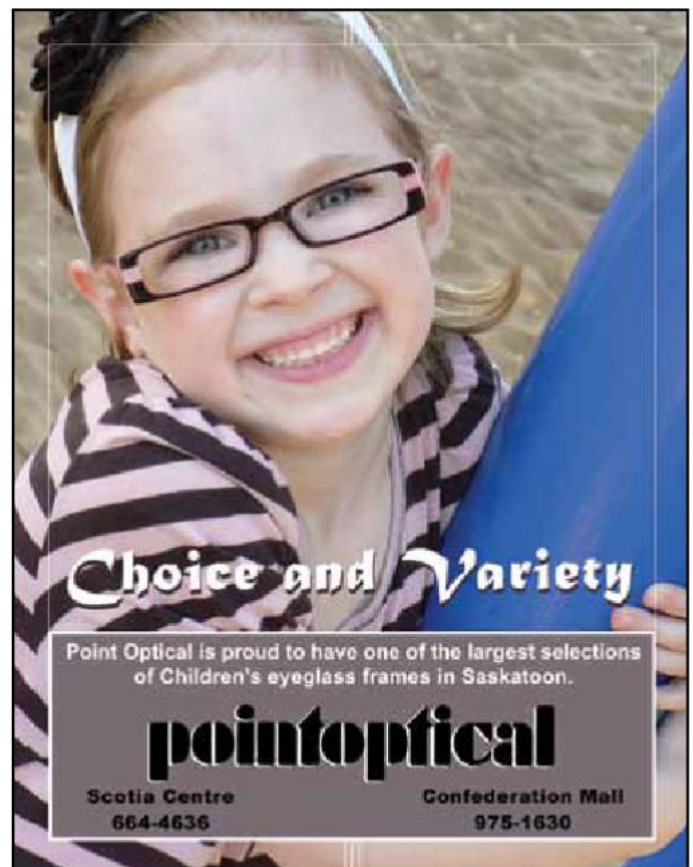
Indoor air pollutants such as dust mites, mold, mildew, animal dander, and smoke are just some of the irritants that are circulating through your homes ducts.

What can you do about it?
Discover more on our website and book your spring furnace and duct cleaning today.



Caliber
AIR REPAIR
FURNACE & DUCT CLEANING
DIRTY DUCTS DONE DIRT CHEAP

306.291.7686 | www.caliberair.ca



Choice and Variety

Point Optical is proud to have one of the largest selections of Children's eyeglass frames in Saskatoon.

pointoptical

Scotia Centre 664-4636 Confederation Mall 975-1630

"We counted about 130 people, a good sized group and a very good presentation, overall, by the consultant to summarize a fairly complex plan for the Broadway area," Wallace said. "There's a lot of heavy detail in it."

"(The open house was) a nice capstone to the planning process, which was community driven," he added. "It was not driven by the city. It was driven and paid for, at least in half, by the community. That's quite unusual."

With the plan complete, it's now up to the city to set priorities for acting on the recommendations.

"We've split them into three broad categories," Wallace said.

"The first thing is, we had some outstanding recommendations from the Nutana Local Area Plan that we just could not get implemented (previously). That was a plan that goes back to 2001. We're going to concentrate on those as a first priority."

That priority will focus on the zoning treatment along Broadway, and how that would affect the character of Broadway, he said.

Secondly, the city will group recommendations according to the priority determined by the Nutana steering committee.

"And then thirdly there's going to be recommendations that go into a long-term strategy," he said. "(Those will be) large things like building a plaza or closing streets to bring them

into linear parks. That's not going to happen overnight. That will be a third or long-term category."

"We're already implementing some of this," he added. "On the zoning side, which you'll see first, there's going to be a zoning amendment proposed, once we sit down with the land owners along Broadway."

DARRELL NOAKES,

VERB NEWS WEEKLY NEWSPAPER



Sundance Spas of Saskatoon

Unmatched relaxation and an unparalleled experience for your own home.

Come see us and see just how soothing a Sundance Spa can be for you.

Sundance Spas

#104- 2750 Faithfull Ave, Saskatoon

(306) 931-3900

www.sundancesaskatoon.ca



Get the custom window coverings you want for a great price with Budget Blinds®.



Budget Blinds
a style for every point of view™

Great styles. Great values.

Shutters
Drapes
Wood Blinds
Horizontal Shades
Roller Shades
Vertical Blinds
Screens®
Woven Woods
and more!

For a free in-home consultation with one of our Style Consultants, please contact our office at (306) 242-5706.

Simplify your life.

Choose Hillcrest.

From funeral... to cemetery... to reception and more.
At Hillcrest, we'll take care of all the details
- *at one convenient location.*

For information and a FREE Planning Kit

Call 306 477-2236

24 hr. Emergency Assistance: 306 477-4400



HILLCREST MEMORIAL GARDENS & FUNERAL HOME
Cemetery, Funeral Home, Cremation & Reception Centre
8th St. E., 1st right past Briargate Rd. • www.hillcrestmemorial.ca



Discover Hillcrest's full-service convenience!

Funeral • Cemetery • Cremation • Reception



**SASKATOON'S ONLY 36
HOLE GOLF COURSE**

*Classic Italian Dining with
a MODERN Twist*



More than just golf...all year round!

382 Cartwright Street
Saskatoon SK S7T 1B1
306.956.1100 | www.willowsgolf.com

PROFILE

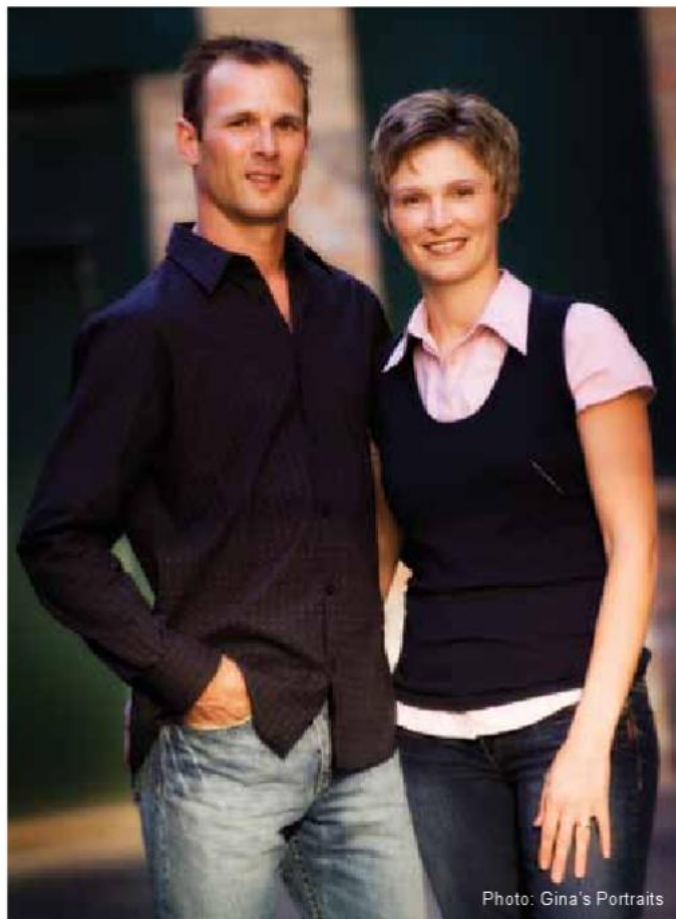
Cleaning Service: **A Blessing for Some Families**

Spring cleaning. There is no getting around it, a cleaning from top to bottom is a perfect way to de-clutter a home of those household items no longer wanted or needed. Plus, we all know, a dust-free, clean home means better air quality for everyone.

For many of us, regular cleaning takes place in fits and starts, in between taking a child to ballet class and starting dinner. A block of time dedicated to intense cleaning likely doesn't happen as often as we would like or worse, it cuts into time better spent with family.

If your budget allows, consider hiring a professional cleaning service. Taking away the majority of cleaning tasks to give more options for leisure time is Melanie and Brent Mensch's philosophy for their business, Handy Housewives.

"We started it to help families to free up their time so they could spend more of it with family members and friends," Melanie explains. "We had a young family ourselves as our daughters were 10 and 7 years old at the time, and from this personal experience, decided that we would concentrate only



Brent and Melanie Mensch started up Handy Housewives to help clients spend more times with friends and loved ones.

on residential services as a niche for our business."

After six years of operation in Saskatoon, it continues to be a home-based business, reflecting the company's theme "inspiring time together, enriching family life."

Handy Housewives offers residential cleaning, food preparation, grocery shopping, laundry and ironing services.

"The first step is a consultation to assess what the

family needs," she says. "If it is cleaning, we go through the home to sort out the square footage for cleaning, as this information is the basis for an estimate. If a client is a regular client versus a one-time service, we offer different rates."

Clients choose the frequency, type of service and select the day and time to have the service completed.

"Every home has different needs, so we diversified

beyond cleaning to offer additional services for families," she says. "In the case of food preparation, we go into the client's home for several hours and prepare five to seven meals, based on families' recipes, that are then frozen. We might do the grocery shopping for these meals or use ingredients already in the kitchen."

"The greatest joy for me is when I first meet with a homeowner and they say how overwhelmed they are, and when I go back to hear how we have been a godsend and our services have blessed their family."

The company gains most of its clients from personal referrals. It uses the phone book yellow pages and a web site as its main marketing tools.

Melanie says one of the neat things she has seen is a number of repeat customers who have purchased Handy Housewives' Gift Certificates. The business has provided gift certificates for many occasions: Valentines, Christmas, birthdays, anniversaries and for people recovering from injury or surgery.

"There is one individual who lives in Texas and his elderly parents live in Saskatoon," she says. "Every year for Christmas and Mother's Day he purchases our gift certificates for them."

COLLEEN GNYP



Decora Homes Ltd.

p: 306.651.1750 | www.decora-homes.com



Show Home with gorgeous open concept • 3 + 1 bedroom
walkout basement • 10ft ceilings • oversized windows • much more.
Visit the Show Home or call 651-1750 for more information.



This is the beautiful custom kitchen at the Brookside Drive Show Home.

Visit Our New Show Home

114 Brookside Drive - Warman
Open until March 31, 2010

Hours are as follows:
Wednesday 7-9 pm | Thursday 7-9 pm
Saturday 1-5 | Sunday 1-5

For your personal viewing call 651-1750.

Building a Place for you to call Home

*If this Show Home is what you are searching for,
Decora Homes has lots available within Saskatoon for you to choose from.*

TOP 10 Cleaning Tips

Tanya Brittain, president of Azarius Enterprises, home cleaning division, offers timeless and invaluable advice for a better organized home.

1. Always work top to bottom, this way dust and debris will fall to the floor and you eliminate re-doing your work.
2. Have a plan of attack and use a checklist.
3. Fold your toilet paper in a triangle like in a hotel for a "polished finish."
4. Stuck-on food in your microwave? Microwave a cup of water (add lemon juice if you desire) for 1-2 minutes and the steam will make the gunk wipe away easily.
5. Use only water and two terry towel rags (one wet and one dry) for mirrors for the best streak-free finish.
6. Avoid using feather dusters; use a damp rag instead and wipe items off, lifting them up and dusting around and underneath them.
7. Re-use items for organizing: baby food jars for spices, shoe boxes for photos. keep garlic and onions fresh by hanging them in a knee high stocking in a cool, dry place.
8. Have a place for everything and keep everything in its place!
9. For big families with small children, keep bins/tubs handy for quick toy pick-up and storage.
10. Keep cleaning products together in a caddy.

RESIDENTIAL DESIGN & DRAFTING SERVICES



CADvantage
DESIGN LTD.

Professional residential design / drafting

- Custom Home Design
- Award Winning Service



Phone: (306) 373-3805 Fax: (306) 373-3806

103-3718 Kinnear Place, Saskatoon

www.cadvantagedesign.com

SPOTLIGHT

Home Designed with Organization in Mind:

Clear kitchen, ample storage and even a mud room

Being well-organized is central to Marty and Cathy Edwards' lives. Their busy family, with three growing children, depends on it. Their thriving home-based businesses depend on it.

Marty works as a realtor, and the couple operates a custom home design and building company, Sanoma Homes, from their home offices.

So, it should come as no surprise that when it came time to design their own home, organization would be built right in from the very start.

"I come from a big Ukrainian family," says Cathy. "Our entertaining isn't necessarily the fabulous affairs of 50 adults drinking wine and having a great old time. It's more often the birthday party of a four-year-old who insists on inviting all 13 of his cousins and all extended family members. We end up having dinner for 30 people on a relatively regular basis."

"To me, the heart of the home is the kitchen," she says. "The rest of the house



Photos: Cathy and Marty Edwards

The kitchen is the heart of the home, says Cathy Edwards. It balances the home, tying the casual portion of the living space to the formal portion.

evolved around the kitchen. The kitchen had to be the core. It had to be a good large space. It had to be integrated into the main living space, so it felt like I was still part of the event, but it had to have enough seclusion that I didn't have 50 people leaning up against the island while I was trying to get the meal out."

Marty explains that the kitchen provides balance, dividing the house into a

"formal" side containing the dining room and Cathy's office, and a "casual" side containing the great room with two-sided fireplace, television and entertainment centre.

Storage, Storage Everywhere

What really makes this 5800 square foot estate home in Casa Rio East stand out is what you don't see. Anything that would cause

clutter in any other house is neatly organized by the addition of ingenious storage spaces in each room. "The mud room, the kitchen and the toy closet are the key areas that you have to pay a ton of attention to, to make sure that they're well-designed to set you and your family up for success," Cathy says.

Children's toys are a real challenge for many families.

"They get toys galore for gifts and there's nowhere to put them," she says. "Invariably, people's sitting rooms or main family living space become a collection of various shades of plastic, because the children need to be entertained. We've solved that problem by always recommending that for the little bit of extra square footage, you build a proper toy closet. Everything can be organized. It can be behind a pocket door, well-laid out, easy for the kids to put their things away. Literally, every night, right before our kids go to bed, they do the 'five minute tidy'. All the toys are put away. I can close that door and it's an adult space once again.

That same closet also holds the stereo equipment and associated CDs and DVDs. As the children grow, the toy bins can store board games, school books and other supplies.

"To me, it's all about a proper layout and good



Elegant and durable: The Jatoba wood floor is tough as nails, perfect for young children racing Tonka Trucks and Mighty Machines. Toys can be stowed away quickly, transforming the space for use as a home office or for entertaining guests.



The mud room is the one room that Cathy Edwards would never give up. The upper shelving was designed to accommodate school backpacks, the coat hooks overcome a child's reluctance to use coat hangers, and the lower shelving keeps boots and shoes from getting underfoot, as well as serving as a bench. If you look closely, you'll see enclosed storage in the corner.

organization," says Cathy. "Every woman wants her house to be stylish and well-appointed, but at the same time we have to realize that the only way to be successful in having that look with kids is that everything has to be designed to set them up for success. Kids have to be engaged in 10 seconds or less if we want them to complete a task. Few kids will open a closet door and use a hanger, but a designated coat hook will often get used."

"I don't think a house with well-designed storage will ever be poorly used storage, even after kids grow up," she says.

The Mighty Mud Room

The spacious mud room, too, is an important feature of the house, particularly suited for the weather of Saskatoon.

A lot of people select their homes based on catalogue designs and Internet searches, Cathy notes. Often, that leads them to finding floor plans created for climates and environments that just don't apply in Saskatchewan.

"In a lot of big US cities, they don't have basements and they wear their shoes in their house 24-7, 365 days a year," she says. "We're just not in that environment."

The mud room keeps the home orderly and tidy, emphasizes Cathy.

"I could give up so much of this house, but the one thing that would stay would be the mud room, because it creates sanity for the whole family," she says.

"Living on an acreage is part of it, but I think even in the city, for any family with kids who spends time outside or come and go and do

their thing, it's absolutely an essential element."

Doug Schmidt, owner of CADvantage Design, is Sanoma's regular designer. He helped the Edwards family design their new home.

"Mud rooms are a very common element in all of our designs, except for a starter home, where space is at a premium," he says, adding that these practical spaces have become very much in demand in Saskatoon.

"That was a main feature of the Edwards' house," he says. "It is in a lot of houses that we do."

The mud room is an element that Cathy makes sure is incorporated into any "Sanoma" home.

"There's three key elements (to any home we design)," she says. "Always a mud room, always a toy or media closet and always a kitchen with certain functional elements."

One of those functional elements in the kitchen is what Cathy refers to as the "mom's desk," an assigned spot for a computer, the telephone, bills and other papers, and children's schedules.

"I find that if there's not a designated spot for those items, they can spread out all over the kitchen counter," she says. "It can be chaotic. People complain that their kitchen is too small. It's because they don't have a segregated spot to deal with those items, and those items end up trickling over into all of the main work space. Any good command centre needs good organization!"

DARRELL NOAKES



Quality Brand Name Flooring

Commercial & Residential

**Best Selection of Hardwood ■ Laminate ■ Vinyl ■ Ceramic Tile
Granite Tile ■ Marble Tile ■ Cork ■ Area Rugs ■ Carpets & More**

955-4441

7 - 844 51st St. E ■ Saskatoon, SK ■ www.cornerstoneflooring.ca

Mike Boychuk

Giving YOU the Advantage in Real Estate!

**EVERY 6 DAYS I HELP
ONE OF MY CLIENTS
BUY OR SELL A PROPERTY!**

Friendly, No-Pressure Service

Good advice is important when buying or selling property. Allow my experience and market knowledge to get you the best possible results.

(306) 717-1144

mike@mikeboychuk.ca www.mikeboychuk.ca

Hallmark Realty & Associates Ltd.
5-3012 Louise St, Saskatoon SK S7J 3L8

* Statistic is based on average performance since January 2008.



KITCHENS BY

Classic WOODCRAFT



Locally Manufactured Built To Order
Kitchens, Cabinets and Doors

Computerized Design Service
for New Construction and
Renovations

Outstanding Quality

Visit our
NEW Showroom at:

618 Cynthia Street
Saskatoon, SK S7L 6A2

Monday - Friday: 8am - 5pm
Saturday: 10am - 4pm

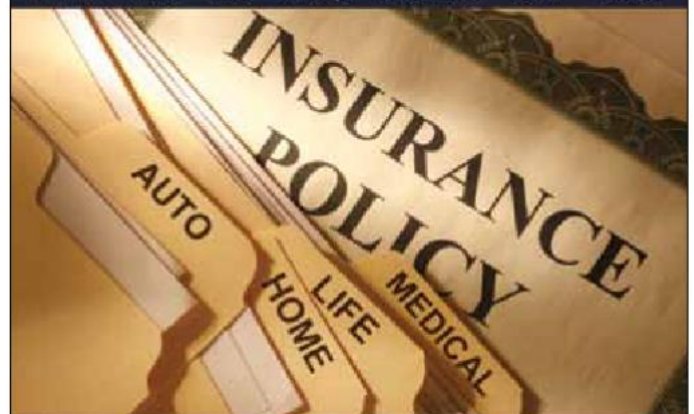
Visit our Online Gallery at: www.classicwoodcraft.com

Tel: 306-244-7224 Fax: 306-244-7553

 **the co-operators®**

A Better Place For You®

Home Auto Life Group Business Farm Travel



**NEWMAN INSURANCE
SERVICES LTD.**

330-2600B 8th Street East - Saskatoon, SK S7H 0V7

Ph. 306-934-7309

NEXT DOOR TO KELSEY'S ON 8th STREET

Simplifying Our Homes for Spring

Who would have thought that Saskatoon has so many businesses offering home cleaning and organizing? They promote services ranging from dusting the living room to redesigning the garage. Some offer to do your shopping and cook your meals. Others aspire to help you organize your home office, or whole house in fact. They can even help you put your family routines in order so you have the time to reconnect your body and soul.

- DARRELL NOAKES



Photo: Courtesy Rev-A-Shelf

An organized home might be the start of a solution for an organized life.

and peak depression, we embrace spring cleaning.

We've long recognized spring cleaning as a ritual that lifts our spirits and cleanses our minds, as much as it purges our homes of the last vestiges of winter's accumulations. The tradition

None of this should come as any surprise. As we get older, our lives become more complicated, we have more to do and less time to do it in, and acquire more responsibility.

Our recent economic boom has made us giddy to purchase more "stuff" whether or not we really need it or want it. It's almost as though our homes fill with clutter on their own. We scratch our heads trying to figure out where everything is coming from, and it makes them ache trying to figure out how to make it all go away.

Deep down, we might all suspect we have an underlying condition that makes us hold on to so much stuff and not part with it. Could we be chronic hoarders? We've all had relatives or friends with houses so full they deserved a more serious label than "pack rat." Not a week goes by that there isn't a news story somewhere about a compulsive hoarder. There's even a television series dedicated to the disorder, *Hoarders*.

We can thank those extreme cases for setting our minds at ease. It's comforting to be able to detach ourselves from those exhibiting a true mental disorder, and declare that we "would never be as bad as that." Mental health professionals say that about one person in 100 could be diagnosed with the disorder of hoarding. Truth is, everyone has a bit of the compulsive hoarder in them. Our consumer culture depends on it.

Some professional organizers recognize five levels of compulsive hoarding, or to put it into more palatable terms, "chronic disorganization." Most of us would fit comfortably into either of the two lowest levels, but I'd be willing to bet we all know someone who fits the middle category, that is, someone who needs at least a little help putting their life in order, both literally and figuratively.

Clutter often goes hand in hand with mood disorders, although it's not really clear which causes which. One thing's for sure, as we leave behind that time of year known for the winter blues, seasonal affective disorder

continues long after we no longer need to air out homes heated by wood or coal fires. Before vacuum cleaners, the house got a thorough cleaning once it was warm enough to open windows and doors to let winds carry dust out of the house. Yet, the origins of spring cleaning exceed practical considerations. The practice dates back centuries, linked to cultural and spiritual traditions. It's no coincidence that spring cleaning occurs around the same time as so many religious observances.

Lately, I've been reading *The Simple Living Manifesto: 72 Ideas to Simplify Your Life*. At first glance, it might seem that a list of 72 things to do would hardly simplify anything, let alone your whole life. But, really, all those points boil down to two simple principles: identify what's most important to you; eliminate everything else. "It means getting rid of many of the things you do so you can spend time with people you love and do the things you love," writes its creator Leo Babauta. "It means getting rid of the clutter so you are left with only that which gives you value." Describing even those 72 ideas as "an incomplete list," Babauta recommends not trying to tackle everything at once. Choose one at a time, he says, and focus on that. That sounds pretty simple.

Of the ideas listed, only five deal with our physical home environments, the stuff of spring cleaning: purge your stuff (de-cluttering); get rid of the big items; edit your rooms (one at a time); edit closets and drawers (one drawer or shelf at a time); and simplify your wardrobe (focus on simple styles and a few solid colours). The rest provide sensible, straightforward advice for de-cluttering the mind, slowing down and getting healthier. "Drive slowly," Babauta writes. That has to be one of my favourites.

As I tackle my own spring cleaning, I've dusted off an old vinyl album by The Tubes. "What Do You Want from Life?" seems like the perfect accompaniment to the annual ritual.

All I need now is a foolproof plan and an airtight alibi.



Re-organize Your Home

Experts Share Their Room-by-Room Secrets

Many of us search for that elusive period of time to organize our homes, but the truth is, we'll never really find the time; we simply have to make the time.

- GAIL JANSEN



A place for everything, everything in its place. Photo: Courtesy Rev-A-Shelf.

Making the time for home organization is one of the best ways to rid yourself of some of the chaos that comes with living in the new millennium. It could be cleaning a single shelf, cupboard or room, or looking to a professional organizer to lead you through the process.

"I think when your house is in order, you tend not to be in chaos yourself," says professional organizer Brenda Toon, who has a passionate flair for finding and organizing those "prime real estate" spots located within a home. "When you don't have clutter, you function more efficiently without the constant drag of looking for things."

This is a philosophy Toon and fellow organizers Chantelle Butterfield of Funktional Space and Lisa Strozen of Green Space Solutions agree with wholeheartedly.

To these three organizers, each with their own specialties, finding "a place for everything, and everything in its place," is an axiom they live by and model for those they aim to help put order back into their lives.

And they start, as you should, with the space that greets you the moment you first walk into your home.

Civilize the Mud Room

"An entryway or mud room," says Strozen, "should be a clutter-free zone, because the first thing you see when you walk in the door shouldn't be a pile of clutter that instantly stresses you."

Instead, says Strozen, it should be one of the main places in your home you strive to keep clutter-free.

To help keep the chaos tamed, Strozen suggests that every family member should have a space of their own to put their belongings. It could be one of the new stylish lockers for home use that is both functional and easy to keep, or something as simple as a series of baskets and coat hooks easily reached and labeled for each family member to store their personal items. You may even need one for the family dog!

Benches can serve another purpose besides sitting. They can contain cubbies that hold baskets, or lift open to hold hats, toques, and mitts. Underneath, cabinet-styled shoe racks can store shoes, tucked away out of sight.

As for the bills and piles of junk mail greeting you as you walk through the door, Strozen suggests having baskets available that allow you to sort through them right away before they even make it into your house. One is for bills, one for important papers and one for items that can go straight into recycling.

Streamline the Kitchen

Perhaps the most challenging of rooms for both homeowners and organization professionals alike is the kitchen. This is a space whose organizational needs seems daunting at best and terrifying at worst. The kitchen requires streamlined efficiency, maximal flow and is a space where the tools

of the organizing trade can really come out to show their effectiveness.

"The kitchen is prime real estate," says Toon. "It's here that the nerve centre of the family exists, whether they're having breakfast, cooking dinner, or just sitting around and visiting."

"The trick to organizing it is having the tools at your disposal to make it more functional. Shelves, baskets, containers, and above all else – a label maker."

By far, when organizing a kitchen, Toon finds one of the biggest issues she faces to be people's reluctance to upgrade to more efficient and space saving products.

"People get so attached to their kitchen tools that they don't take the time to upgrade them," says Toon. "Just as you would go out and purchase a new shirt after it's gone out of season, you should make sure you upgrade other items for the benefits they can give as well."

With items such as collapsible bowls, colanders, and even measuring cups, Toon says, "there are huge dynamics for saving space if you use the right products."

Chantelle Butterfield's company Funktional Space specializes in improving the organization and function of a kitchen. She says it's all about design, and finding the right sort of hardware to create a workable area if you are building new, or fixing minor flaws in the design of an established kitchen.

To do that, she turns to catalogues she brings to each client's home, from companies located right in Saskatoon. Their many products can simplify and organize so many areas of a kitchen, and indeed, other spaces throughout the home.

In terms of actual structural and hardware changes to cabinetry, the most popular that Butterfield sees is the conversion of static lower cabinets into deep and easily-accessible rolling drawers.

Other handy kitchen organizing tips and advice compiled by the trio of organizers over the years include:

- handy spice racks that free up space such as those found at www.spicestack.com

- using desk dividers in kitchen drawers to help keep items separate
- installing a magnetic board or cork board on the inside of pantry doors to hold photo collages or important papers or recipes
- bars with “S” hooks installed in under-utilized spaces to hang cooking utensils; utilizing tray dividers to store platters and serving dishes in deep high-up cupboards
- installation of roll-out garbage cans and recycling bins, a personal favourite of Strozen’s, considering the “green” nature of her company, Green Space Solutions.

“There is an educational dimension to organization that can lean towards teaching clients to be more environmentally-friendly,” says Strozen. “and it helps me to educate people to find alternatives to putting their clutter in landfills.”

Calm the Bedrooms

Lisa Strozen finds that often the rooms that hold the biggest clutter before reorganizing are the bedrooms of both adults and children.

With adults, the clutter culprit usually comes in the form of clothing and memorabilia, while for children, it’s toys.

To encourage both adults and kids alike to let go of items they no longer use, Strozen says she approaches the subject gently and with logic, “but if they’re not ready – then they’re not ready.” In that case, she then encourages people to put the things they’re uncertain about into a box. They store them for a set amount of time before revisiting them with a fresh set of eyes, which may or may not cause a change of heart.

“It’s really an emotional process for people, but it’s all about priorities,” she says. “If people can understand that they’re recycling this clutter, or it’s getting reused in some way through a donation, it makes them feel better, rather than just throwing it in the garbage.”

Once all of the clutter is cleaned out from the bedroom, attention can then be turned to maximizing the space.



Wouldn't it be nice just to cook rather than search through cooking clutter? Photo: Rev-a-Shelf.

In adult bedrooms, closet organizers both custom-made and ready-made can be secured to ensure that every ounce of space is utilized to its capacity, and inserts can be pressed into drawers to ensure that socks, underwear, and even jewelry are kept orderly and neat.

In children’s rooms, it becomes more complicated due to the addition of toys and artwork brought home from school.

To triumph over some of these dilemmas, organization professionals have come up with a variety of ideas such as removing closet doors and utilizing a curtain as a covering to maximize the extra spaces doors often hide. The also lower shelves and hang rods at manageable, kid-friendly heights. Hanging baskets can be utilized to store items children use daily for sports and activities.

Clean pizza boxes, available for a nominal price from pizzerias, make ideal storage solutions for children’s artwork.

“Getting rid of items from their childhood can be difficult for kids,” says Strozen. “But engaging them in the process, and putting a ‘donate box’ in their room, gets kids thinking

about letting go. By trying to solve the problem of clutter, and earmarking items for donation to charitable organizations, you open up an opportunity to teach your child some valuable life lessons.”

Better-Organized Bathrooms

Bathrooms are another space where disorder can cause untoward stress and tension, and due to their small size, it’s often difficult to find any additional storage space.

When building new, or renovating bathrooms, Butterfield stresses the importance of adding drawers, drawers and more drawers.

“Women have tons of little things that can quickly clutter up a bathroom,” says Butterfield. “Combs, brushes, hair products, and make-up. Ultimately, I would have cabinets on either side of the mirror that have three drawers each to make a total of six little drawers. Just be sure to leave one for your husband so that he can feel it’s partly his.”

For those bathrooms that won’t be undergoing a renovation anytime soon, Butterfield suggests finding areas where additional storage can be added, most notably in the space above the toilet.

"On average," says Butterfield, "without over-the-toilet cabinets installed, people are losing approximately six square feet of space that could be used."

Floors can also provide welcome storage space with strategically-placed baskets filled with artfully rolled-up towels, and an under-the-sink shelf, designed to go around the pipes and plumbing underneath.

Don't forget a basket for boudoir reading materials!

De-clutter the Family Room

Next to our bedrooms, our family or recreation rooms are the next biggest collectors of items that need some semblance of control or order, from board games to video games, movies to music, and everything in between. Getting control of this room means creating a space

where the whole family can relax together, and where entertaining can take place with little or no notice.

For Toon, this is where her label maker can really get to work, by labeling cords, entertainment pieces, TVs, DVD players, and even games systems. Time and bewilderment are saved should cords need to be disconnected for replaced or moved items, new hardware has to be added, the area cleaned or furniture rearranged.

Baskets and colour-coded boxes can aid in the organization of kids' games, which once sorted, can be individually placed on easy-access shelves.

For DVDs and CDs, individual disks can be taken out of their hard-shelled cases and placed into specialized binders with pocketed

pages to store them. Pages can be added and removed as needed, and disks can be alphabetized for easy access.

Family rooms are also the ideal place for furniture that serves double duty, such as a high bar-styled table which functions as a serving centre for entertaining; a games table for family game night, as well as a place where kids can do homework; ottomans that have added storage for blankets and extra bedding for a sofa bed, or as additional storage for kid's toys and games.

"As long as it's easy for kids to access their stuff and put it back," says Butterfield, "the chances that they will actually put things away will increase dramatically, minimizing the amount of time you'll have to clean up before you get a chance to sit down and watch a movie."

- GAIL JANSEN

The Orderly Home Office

The advent of personal computers has ushered in a new era of home offices, and a whole new space in which to collect clutter. While paper continues to be the bane of the home office's existence, the recent addition of cords for PCs, cell phones, digital cameras, iPods and power bars has added a new layer of clutter that has many of us stymied. To the rescue come the organization professionals with ideas aplenty.

*Label your cords so you know what gadget they belong to. Make sure they are de-tangled and not overloaded on one power source.

*For those bills and items that need to be looked at some day in the future, a five-year pocket calendar offers just the right solution. They help you remove those important future-tense papers that all too often clutter up in-baskets, bulletin boards, and desk surfaces. Once all filed, all you have to remember is to look at your calendar daily.

*Another way to reduce the amount of paper coming into your home office is to make sure your 'paper' contacts possess your email address for correspondence instead of sending you reminders in the mail. "People

should sign up for paperless billing and do their banking online," says Lisa Strozen of Green Space Solutions. "Some companies that utilize paperless billing will also give you a discount on your bill, so you're not only using less paper, you're also saving money."

*For those articles and recipes you're continuously cutting out of magazines or finding on the internet and printing, Strozen suggests putting a timeline on you might like to refer to them and filing them in an accordion file folder according to that chosen date. Should the date pass without you reading them, simply re-file them for up to a year, when you revisit them to find out if you really need.

*Invest in a paper shredder to get rid of no-longer-needed personal bills and documents.

*To keep your desk clear of objects, use your wall to mount a magnetic knife strip to hold scissors and notes pinned with magnets, or a cookie sheet painted in the colour of your choice to create an instant and inexpensive magnet board. You can also hang small galvanized metal baskets from a bar, to serve as perfect pen and knick-knack holders.



*Create a main storage area, preferably with doors or hidden in drawers where similar items and office supplies for specific tasks can all be grouped together. Doing so will allow you to see at a glance what you have and what you need more of.

*Insert cutlery and kitchen drawer dividers in your desk drawers to help separate and group similar, such as envelopes, stamps and stationary for a mail station.

*Attractive storage boxes may be purchased to hold essential bills, receipts, file folders and other correspondence. Label them and stack them.

- GAIL JANSEN

TAMING THE CLUTTERED HOUSE

If our homes are in order, chances are our lives will start to fall into place as well. Knowing how to start calming the residential chaos, however, is not something that comes naturally to all of us. We turned to four talented Saskatoon professional home organizers to share some tricks and tips to help you get started. They show they have a flair for finding a place for everything. They also understand the psychological benefits of living in an organized home.



PARTICIPANTS



Carla-Sofia Crevaux started Simple Living Consulting in 2009 and is enjoying every minute of it. Her work experience in administration, fitness and coaching prepared her for the organization industry. "My philosophy is to keep it simple and easy so you get to enjoy what really matters, family."



Natasha Solvason entered into the organizing industry as a way to utilize her natural ability, drawn from her past work experiences and to help people in need of assistance. Her business, Natasha Solvason Organizing Solutions, focuses on working with families, seniors who are downsizing and estate organizing. Natasha is a member of the Professional Organizers of Canada.



Kim Stratemeyer lives in Buena Vista where she operates her business Room Rescuer. "Everyone needs a little R & R in their lives. Here's to having your home company-ready all the time."



Theresa Torgunrud of In Place Organizing believes that a home is an expression of one's inner world and that every client is unique. She says her organizing solutions support clients' needs, reflect who they are, and enhance their environments. Services provided include: clutter control, paper flow systems, room revitalization, moving preparation/unpacking, home inventory, individualized assistance for Seniors, and special projects. She is a member of the Professional Organizers of Canada.

Why do you believe personal organization is so important?

Crevaux: Organizing enables you to achieve more desirable outcomes at work, at home and in life. Organizing is taking the time to set goals for what you want and need, plan for the realization of these goals and implement the systems to achieve them. And last but not least, finding ways to maintain the systems so you stay on track.

Solvasen: Personal organization is an important element to living a low-stress lifestyle.

Stratemeyer: It keeps everyone at peace. Walk into a cluttered home and you know that person has a cluttered mind and life.

Torgunrud: Organizing has the potential to transform our physical, mental and emotional space. It is a tool to create homes, offices, and schedules that reflect who we are, what we want, and where we're going.

What are the main benefits people can gain from organizing and simplifying their homes?

Crevaux: Peace of mind is one of the most sought-after states and the biggest benefit from getting organized. We want to get home and rest after a day's work, relax or simply enjoy our family and friends. In getting organized, you also gain more time for yourself, awake more refreshed and will be more efficient at home and at work.

Solvasen: Organization makes everything more efficient. Donating unused items is a great way to give back to your community.

Stratemeyer: Having a streamlined home aids in time management; you know where everything is.

Torgunrud: Having well-ordered, useful and appealing surroundings frees us to be more mindful, effective and balanced.

What are some of the consequences of being disorganized at home?

Crevaux: The consequences and repercussions are many. Spending too much money on things we buy even if we have them but can't find them, wasting time looking for things, not enough time with family and friends or simply doing chores around the house. Not being able to enjoy our house and compensating by going out and spending money instead of saving it, and very often, missing appointments. We can become impatient, we can start experiencing a lack of focus and eventually anxiety or depression sets in, in some cases.

Solvasen: Being disorganized simply adds another element of stress to already stressful lives. Disorganization can lead to tardiness, loss of costly items, and tension in the household.

Stratemeyer: Lost time, missing out on invitations you either lost or didn't reply too, not wanting to have friends and family over.

Torgunrud: A disorganized home often results in heightened stress and anxiety levels, tension between people who share the living space, investing considerable time and energy looking for things, and spending money replacing items unnecessarily. What are some common examples of how people are disorganized in their living spaces?

Crevaux: The entry way is the place where you are greeted and either puts you in a good mood or a bad one depending on how cluttered it is. People get confused about tasks such as chores, sports activities, appointments and disorganized paperwork such as bill payments and school forms to fill out. Overcrowded kitchen cabinets make it hard to have fun when it's time to cook a meal and enjoy it with the family. Overstuffed bedroom closets can be really stressful.

Solvasen: A build-up of unused items causes unnecessary clutter. Toys, clothing, and equipment that children have grown out of should be donated or sold. Sentimental items that are buried deep in the closets should be gifted to other family members who may have the space to display them.

Stratemeyer: Paperwork is always the devil in every home. Also, people don't put common things together for easier access and knowing the location of something not used on a regular basis.

Torgunrud: Let's see...full or under-utilized closets/cupboards/drawers/shelves, piles of unsorted paper, mounds of laundry, toys spread about, kitchen items or food waiting to be cleaned or put away, non-contained recyclables/garbage, outdoor entryways cluttered with shoes and outerwear.... What rooms in the house are usually the most disorganized and why?

Crevaux: The entry way is almost always an issue, especially with families. So, the simpler the system, the better the outcome for that area. Another room that tends to be problematic is the kitchen. The kitchen cupboards and shelves need attention in the systems we choose and the flow of those systems. An example is the location of the spice rack. Since most of the time we need it for cooking on the stove, it makes sense to have it near the stove and not at the other end of the kitchen.

Solvasen: The storage areas tend to be more disorganized than the rest of the house because they are a dumping ground for possessions that are not used frequently. Therefore, it is easy for stuff to pile up over time. Also, storage areas are generally behind closed doors and easy to forget about.

Stratemeyer: I would say almost every room, especially kitchens and living rooms, basements and garages.

Torgunrud: For many of us, “out of sight” means “out of mind.” As a result, areas that we don’t spend much time in or places that are hidden are particularly vulnerable to clutter. Examples: closets, storage rooms, garages, basements.

What other aspects of peoples’ lives can be organized to compliment a newly organized house?

Crevaux: I believe that the more we know what we want out of life, the better we become at laying out a plan to achieve it. Looking at and revising our life goals is always a good idea; it also helps us to see where we came from and where we are headed. Here are some of the areas that can be causing problems and affecting other areas of our lives: finances, work, leisure time and sleeping routines.

Solvasen: Maintaining an updated centrally-located calendar for families with multiple children is really important to maintain communication in the home.

Stratemeyer: Usually when you start organizing your home, your life and all other aspects fall into place.

Torgunrud: Manage time more effectively (being proactive, using lists and schedules, having routines, thinking in shorter and longer terms); streamline household systems (paper flow, de-cluttering, cleaning, shopping); arrange objects to create a beautiful environment that reflects and enhances who you are.

What types of people tend to be the most disorganized at home?

Crevaux: We see this in all walks of life but the more you have to juggle, the harder it gets to stay organized and keep track of things, people, everyday activities and responsibilities. Some people are having trouble with organizing because of the system they choose; they might be more visual and not have enough visual reminders in their system or put things away behind closed doors. So “out of sight, out of mind” does not work for them. Others have to have papers put in a vertical position for fast and easy

access as opposed to have it in a filing system inside a filing cabinet.

Solvasen: Young, busy families tend to be more disorganized at home because they have a lot of stuff. The children have toys, outgrown clothing, sports equipment. It becomes very easy to dump items in the storage room when your schedule does not allow for extra time to organize.

Stratemeyer: People who deal with a lot of books and paper.

Torgunrud: Those of us who are busy, bored or overwhelmed at the idea of organizing. Also, individuals who are less detail-oriented or prone to procrastinate. Finally, people who are emotionally attached to most of their belongings tend to find it very challenging to organize their homes because they have difficulty letting things go.

When you work with a client, what does your process entail?

Crevaux: I meet the client for an hour and I analyze and evaluate their situation. I then develop a concrete action plan, envision the space and find a functional and efficient system that will suit my clients learning style. I then put in place a maintenance system for the client to stay on track.

Solvasen: The initial conversation determines the clients’ needs, wants, and their expectations. An on-site assessment is required to determine the approximate time required to complete the job and if any storage supplies need to be purchased. Once this is completed, a plan is provided with a quote according to the budget. The next step is to begin organizing.

Stratemeyer: It varies on the family dynamic, size of the home, and what the client is willing to do and also to keep up. We normally ask what they would like everything to look like when we’re done to get a handle on their thoughts. A mission statement helps and keeps everyone focused.

Torgunrud: After an initial consultation (to discover what needs to be done where and why), I will: recommend a plan of action and decide with the client how to proceed (define project details and who will be involved in the process), sign a contract (indicating how and when the job will proceed and fee for services), complete work and receive feedback, provide invoice, receive payment and provide receipt, and discuss the possibility of follow-up maintenance or further organizing needs.

If a homeowner were to start organizing their living space, what is the first thing they should do?

Crevaux: They can start with determining what the focus or main activity will be for each room of the house. Then come up with a plan to see what they need in order to set up the rooms with their respective designations. Then sort, organize, recycle and trash. These are the first steps to start organizing their homes.

Solvasen: I would recommend working room-by-room sorting the items into four piles: donate, keep, sell, trash. Once you have cleared the room of the clutter, you can rearrange furniture and replace items to a logical spot. Follow through with your piles right away to get rid of the clutter.

Stratemeyer: Start in the room that drives them crazy the most. Pick a corner and start there, moving around the room slowly. Absolutely deal with it right then and there; don’t make another pile to sort through later. Make a decision once on everything and stick to it. Do not rip a closet apart and then sit in a mess for hours. Try and tidy an hour at a time. I believe this is doable for everyone.

Torgunrud: Before doing anything, it’s important to consider where you are, where you’re going, what’s holding you back, and why it’s important to get there. Answer these questions: What’s working? What’s not working? What items are most essential to you? Why



It's worth the money to invest in an organized system for the kitchen if it is a central room of your home.

Photos: Richelieu

do you want to get organized? What's causing problems? Answering these basic questions will help you envision and create a home that meets your unique needs.

What are your top tips on keeping organized at home?

Crevaux: Start with one room at a time using a time limit.

- Use bins to de-clutter and identify them: to trash, to keep, to put elsewhere, to donate.
- Use containers so things don't get mixed together.
- Label everything so that putting back becomes easy.
- Pick up as you go it helps with maintaining your organizing system.
- Look at your mail at the same time or after a particular activity each day and keep the wastebasket near for junk mail.
- Keep your kitchen sink clean and clear.
- Buy one piece of clothing get ride of one or two.

- Purge your desk or your closet every two to three months.
- Create and follow a month-by-month calendar of organizing tasks.

Solvasen: Everything in your home should have a designated spot to return it to after it has been utilized. Use space below beds for storing out of season clothing, wrapping supplies, or linens. Containers designed for under the bed storage are widely available. When you run out of a staple food item, write it on the grocery list. Only buy what is on your list to eliminate multiples in your pantry.

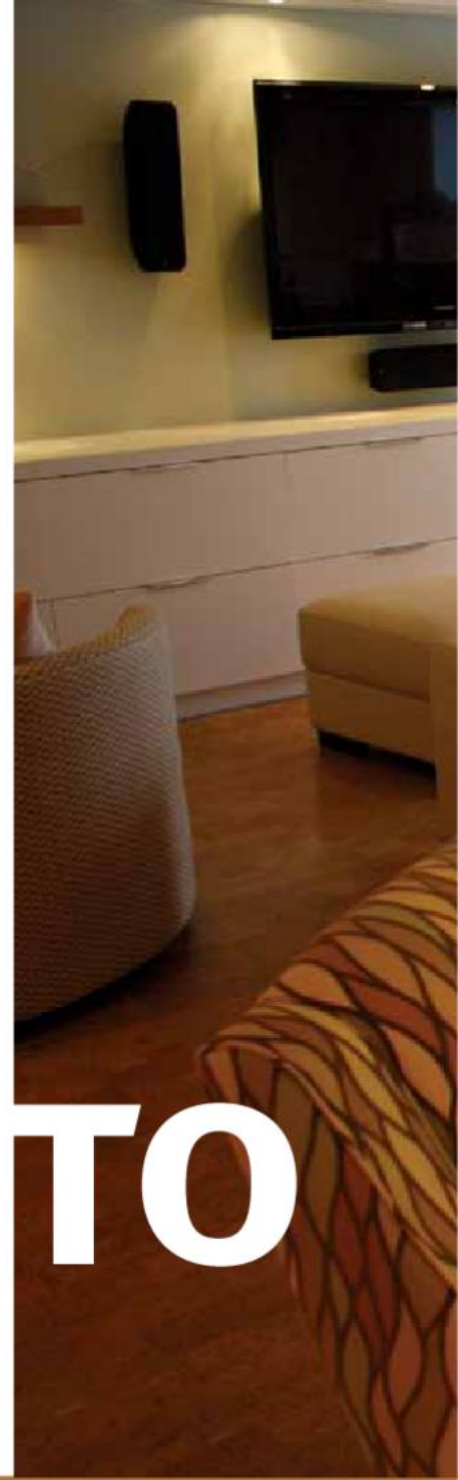
Stratemeyer: Do not leave any room empty-handed. For example: if leaving the living room for the kitchen, see if there is any garbage or dirty dishes to deliver. Do it now. Procrastination breeds disaster. Another good tip is keep a clean kitchen. Never have dishes in the sink or counter.

Torgunrud: Have a place for everything in your home (with an appropriate container).

- Spend 10 minutes de-cluttering every day (including filing paper).
- Keep up with household chores.
- When an area is out of control, make time to give it attention.
- Keep a bag for things to give away or sell.
- Maintain various lists and a message base in a central location.
- Establish helpful routines and schedules.
- Finish what you're doing before starting something new.
- Consider buying less stuff, and when something new comes into your house, something else needs to go. Have limits and routines for maintaining toys, books, and clothing (discard what you don't wear).
- Purge everything (including storage areas) periodically.



FROM BLAND
TO





GRAND:

Home designer Tamara Bowman helped two clients transform a ho-hum basement in their home into a spectacular multi-use space that can be used by family and guests. Exclusively for Saskatoon Home, Bowman shares her strategy for how she accomplished her project.

PHOTOS: TAMARA BOWMAN

In the basement, my clients had insulation problems combined with some poor workmanship so they decided to start with a clean slate. Therefore, they re-wired, rebuilt and re-insulated everything!

Inspired by colour tones on the main level of the home, I selected a soft neutral colour pallet to bring warmth and softness to this now "open concept" space.

There was a rarely-used bedroom built into the original design which shaped the living area into an "L", which in turn, made the basement dark and broken up. To add to this, part of this "L" had a foot-high sub-floor which served no structural purpose but was there only to separate the basement into two spaces.



Bowman's colour palette was chosen to convey warmth.



The rarely used bathtub in the bathroom was replaced with a beautiful glass-enclosed shower.

By removing all of this, we were able to create a feeling of openness and height, plus allow the light to burst into the entire room. Through careful furniture placement, we were still able to separate the two spaces. To accommodate the occasional family member's overnight visit, we utilized cabinetry to create a totally custom Murphy bed.

With this came the issue of privacy. So, I designed a custom-frosted glass full height rolling door to glide across the basement entrance.

Finally, the basement area was to become a theatre room oasis, so the client was quite worried about sound transfer to the upstairs. Consequently, the contractor

insulated the whole ceiling. The rolling glass basement entrance door was also great at combating this issue!

The Office

There was an awkward side entrance to the office in the basement, which made it feel like a tunnel once you were inside. So, I relocated the entrance to open onto



The furniture chosen by Bowman is contemporary yet comfortable.

the rest of the room and installed full-height frosted glass doors to allow for privacy when closed, while still feeling like they are part of the rest of the space. The custom, streamlined cabinetry, with great organization qualities, offer a beautiful view when the doors are open.

The Bathroom

The bathroom was a poorly set up space in the beginning. Two dimly-lit and uninviting areas were separated by a wall. One contained the toilet and sink; the other had a bath tub and sauna entrance.

We removed the central wall and moved the vanity over. The rarely-used bath tub was turned into a beautiful, glass-enclosed shower. I designed a custom deacon's bench to fill in the back corner, and to hang and store sauna goods.

The clients also wanted a bench in their shower, so I decided to integrate the two by designing a customized concrete seat which was sculpted to match the deacon's bench corner and cantilevered over into the shower.

Finally, I dealt with the lighting. Being that this area was huge with no natural light, we installed dimming pot lights and sconces in the mirror to create a wealth of fantastic practical and mood lighting.

The Entertainment Area

Finally the entertainment area was to be sleek and contemporary, yet comfy with a ton of storage, all of which we achieved. The entire storage unit has huge pot-and-pan style drawers with lots of room and is a great hiding spot for components. There are unique display areas above it and built-in surround sound.

The Ceiling and Lighting

This was a bit of a task as a large bulkhead ran right through the centre of the room. I decided to use this as an advantage to help visually separate the room, so we installed a custom-designed "tray" style ceiling coming off the bulkhead to integrate the two ceiling heights and allow for some great ambient lighting.

The fireplace seating area was designed mostly for visiting and reading, but due to its location, there was no good location to hide a lamp cord. Instead, I decided to drop a pendant down from the ceiling to lamp height so that it could double as a lamp.

Furniture

The furniture was altogether another issue as the two people who live here had a generous height difference. The sofa we selected uniquely accommodated both of their heights because it comes with interchangeable head rests, which are great if you are tall but want a low contemporary-looking sofa. Also, as an added bonus, the sofa was Canadian-made with a down-filled back for extra life and comfort.

The round chair is great for snuggling no matter your height, and the arm chairs managed to be comfortable for both of them.

DÉCOR



Unique, modern-style furniture adds a stylish flair to contemporary interiors. Photo: Taylor Made Furniture

Lean, Spacious and Clean: Contemporary Style adds Sophistication to Home

When Cynthia Block and Michael Bone renovated their 1920s-era home, they kept two seemingly conflicting goals in mind: simplify, and maintain character. They decided to use a contemporary style with its sleek furniture, sparse décor and open spaces as the right way to achieve both.

"The biggest reason we decided to overhaul our older home into a more sleek, contemporary design," says Block, "is because we just wanted *less*. This sounds a bit ironic since we added 400 square feet. But with our hectic lives, we were tired of too much stuff."

Living with Less Means Living with More

That living-with-less idea is a hallmark of the contemporary style, agrees Lana Hendin, sales manager with Paliser Rooms.

"A contemporary approach to decorating allows

a homeowner to showcase their space with a 'less is more' mentality," says Hendin. "Carefully-chosen furniture pieces reflecting a simple, sophisticated line allows you to manipulate the room's appearance in relation to size and scale."

Adding colour and texture is crucial," she explains, "and will keep the home comfortable and inviting."

Contemporary furniture design and décor conjures up a sophisticated and spacious feel. It's characterized by sparse and uncluttered spaces, bare windows, straight lines and sleek,

sculpted shapes, neutrals and earthy creams, browns and blacks, punched up with colourful accents and interesting *objets d'art*. The contemporary look also calls for furnishings that are comfortable and well-made, but not overstuffed, fussy or bulky.

"There is always a range of possibilities within a style," says interior designer Kari Hollingsworth. "People often think that contemporary will be cold and sparse, which doesn't have to be the case at all. Clean lines and minimal unique pieces can create a very warm and

comfortable space when each piece is placed so that each is appreciated for its individual value when grouped or standing alone. The right lines with right choices of colour and fabric, and sculptural, textural and tactile elements can create both a simple and complex balanced environment."

Various influences can be incorporated, Hollingsworth says. "We should not feel constrained by any particular style. There is plenty of room for other influences to be incorporated to enhance a style, to create an individual statement, and still keeping the clean lines and minimal look of a modern space."

The addition of interest pieces is one way to add individual character. The Eames

lounge chair is a great example of contemporary vintage. "This lounge, with its smooth, interlocking curves, was first made in the 1950s but has an appeal today for people who want a clean look with expressive lines."

Block says successful furniture selections for the couple's renovated space were sometimes a surprise, but each decision was intentional. "Rather than purchasing stuff that fits with other stuff, the design thought was 'What is the least that we need?' Then it's a little like purchasing art. You want to make sure it's the exact right piece." For example, Block didn't set out to buy a minimalist couch with bold patterns, but the one she purchased turned out to be perfect.

Crafting Classic Contemporary Furniture

Dale and Donelda Muchowski, owners of Taylor Made Furniture, say their customers appreciate not only their craftsmanship and quality of their unique hand-built pieces, but also the new, sleeker designs. Disgruntled with inferior products on the market, the Muchowskis say won't compromise strength or quality of workmanship.

Just as colours and textures pop out in a clean, spacious room, so does a unique piece of well-designed wood furniture.

"I think people will always come back to the strength and beauty of real wood furniture. No other material conveys that feeling of warmth and serenity that

makes a house a home," says Muchowski. "You don't have to worry about it going out of style in ten years and just maybe, if we're doing our job right, it is something that your children will want to own someday," he adds. "We have concentrated on designing sleek, new modern designs that cannot be found anywhere else, using new species of woods and colours that are unique and could never be considered trendy."

It was important for Cynthia Block and her family to honour the original design of their University Drive home while incorporating simplicity and clean lines of a modern interior.

"While our goal was to have less, we also wanted to honour the era of the house.



Redi *World Class Kitchens*

156 Jessop Avenue • Saskatoon • 306-665-0806 • www.redikitchens.com

Redi Kitchens are proudly represented in Regina by
Magnificent Kitchens
 1733 McAra St.
 Regina 306-525-2030

Minimalist II Dining Table

Simple Modern Design, Exceptional Construction

Prices Start At \$3,200.00 with 6 Chairs



Taylor made furniture Hwy. 14, Saskatoon • ph. 384-4840
www.taylormadefurniture.net • taylormadefurniture@sasktel.net

We also tried to keep what we could from the original design. Most of the lighting in the house is still original, including a gold chandelier in the mostly stainless steel bathroom. I love the juxtaposition of that," says Block.

Block says what she appreciates most about the contemporary style of their new space is that it feels "manageable, fresh and clean and most of all, organized!"

"The design leaves little room for error in terms of where things go, so there have been a lot fewer jackets, backpacks and boots

that have gone missing in action," she laughs. "Character homes lend themselves to nostalgia, which includes many things; knick-knacks, candelabras, photographs, and many places to put them like ledges, mantles, and too much furniture. Add a decade of raising little kids, and the whole idea of 'less is more' makes a lot of sense."

To see photos of Cynthia Block and Michael Bone's 1920s era home, please visit www.saskatoon-home.ca

KARIN MELBERG SCHWIER

Tackling
your time
consuming
tasks!



Azarius
Enterprises Ltd.
Cleaning Division



306-665-8489



www.azariusenterprises.ca

*Everything in its place
- and -
a place for everything*



**We offer residential and
home office organizing**

Kitchen • Bathroom • Bedroom • Kids room
Living room • Entry way • Garage • Basement
Paper management • Time and task management

**simple living
consulting**

306-979-4145

www.simplelivingconsulting.com

SUPPLIERS

Civilizing the Chaotic Closet: Systems and Tips for Taming

Admit it. We've all got at least one: The Bad Closet. A gaping maw of jumbled hangers like so many bad teeth, a confusion of stuff piled on shelves and on the floor, shoes askew. A heap of sports equipment. Mystery office supplies stuffed in overflowing boxes. In this new year, we can resolve to tackle cluttered closets. With a bit of thought and some affordable technology, getting them organized is within reach.

Closet organization systems can turn this most important room into a more functional space. This type of system helps put things in their place whether you have walk-in or reach-in closets. It's a solution that doesn't have to be expensive. Many retail stores have very affordable systems.

"More people are looking for simple ways to tackle clutter. Canadian Tire has easy organization solutions for the closet as well as the every room of the home, car, garage or backyard," says Joanne Elson, communications manager for retailer Canadian Tire. "Closets are a pain point for many people, as they are often small or unusually-shaped. The most



Photo: Courtesy Canadian Tire

A well-organized closet is a calming sight to wake up to in the morning.

popular closet organization systems allow customers to tailor them to their own needs. Items like garment racks, wardrobes and cabinets act as great supplemental items for people with small closets. Products that extend or are stackable are a good way to maximize space, while shoe racks, baskets and bins are an easy solution for organizing loose items typically scattered across a closet floor."

Clare Kumar is a profes-

sional organizer who provides advice to individuals as well as manufacturers and retailers of organizing products, including Canadian Tire.

"One of the first things we see in the morning is our closet or dresser drawers," says Kumar, who is a member of Professional Organizers in Canada (POC). "If they are in order, they exude a sense of calm and reassure us that we are in control."

While organization sys-

tems can do wonders for turning closets into more efficient storage units, they aren't going to solve all your problems if you simply have too many clothes and too much stuff in them. It might be painful but the rule is simple: Get. Rid. Of. Things. If you're reticent about just throwing clothes and items away—and you should be—you can recycle and donate an amazing amount.

Clare Kumar's tips on planning an effective closet:

1. Edit your wardrobe to a reasonable volume of clothing. What's reasonable? An amount that lets you select, remove and replace clothing with ease—i.e., no jamming to make it fit! (Editor's note: It's often advised that you should discard any item of clothing you haven't worn for a long time. Alternately, you could store seasonal garments elsewhere than the closet or drawer until it's time to wear them again.)

2. Know your preferences. If you like to fold, you'll want to think more about shelf space. If you like to hang, you'll need closet bars or more hooks. Work with your preferences—not against them—and you'll end up with a system you want to use.

3. General things to keep in mind when planning your closet:



- Group similar clothing— i.e., sweaters, jeans, slacks— to determine just how much space one type takes up. Then source the right type of storage in the right quantity; i.e., nine bulky sweaters require three storage cubbies or 30 inches of shelf space.
- Easily accessible spaces are prime real estate. Keep only the items you use often in this prime location.
- Use a variety of spaces for storage; i.e., the backs of closet doors and under beds.
- Use the full height of your closet from top to bottom.
- 4. Find solutions to fit your budget. Adding closet orga-

nizing infrastructure doesn't have to be expensive. Built-in solutions can make the maximum use of the space, but there are plenty of affordable, flexible solutions on the market. Some examples include: systems which let you create two hanging levels, adding to your storage space; cubbies or small shelving units which can be stacked to create shelf space; hanging organizing units for sweaters, shoes and accessories; shoe boxes—their uniform size enables easy stacking.

5. Measure your storage space and only then try to source the best solution. Shopping online with a site that shares product dimensions can save you time.

KARIN MELBERG SCHWIER

Furniture • Art • Mirrors
Lighting • Fireplaces
Home Decor
Silk Plants & Trees

Charter House Interiors

331 1st Ave N **653-4634**
www.charterhouseinteriors.com

OUTDOOR FURNITURE COMING MID-MARCH

BUILD YOUR FINANCIAL FUTURE AND PROTECT IT.

Why Life's brighter with Sun Life Financial Life Insurance

TODAY IS A GOOD DAY

- **Plan it** – start with a good financial plan.
- **Build it** – home, family and business
- **Protect it** – protect what means most to you with Life insurance.

There's more, so let's talk.



Jason Issel

Jason Issel Financial Services
Bus 306-244-2207
Cell 306-381-4831
jason.issel@sunlife.com
www.sunlife.ca/jason.issel

1114 22nd St., West, Suite 302
Saskatoon, SK S7M 0S5

© Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada, 2009.



GREEN

Baby Goes Green: Creating an Eco-friendly Nursery

Many of today's earth-conscious parents want to start their baby off with a small environmental footprint. From chlorine-free, wood pulp fluff diapers to organic linens and clothes, to safe, pint-sized furniture and items manufactured with sustainable materials, products for your baby can be hazard-free, ethical and environmentally-friendly.

Pink, blue or yellow for the baby's room? It used to be just a choice about the colour. Now we think about the safety of the paint itself and VOCs (volatile organic compounds). These occur naturally as well as synthetically, but they're on the list of 'baddies' on that chemical-free home checklist. Some paint manufacturers offer bases without these compounds, but then add them when the base is tinted.

Benjamin Moore Paints has introduced a line called Natura, which has zero VOCs and is odorless. It comes in an endless number of colour combinations. Furthermore, it's durable, washable and fade-resistant. Visit benjaminmore.ca to learn more about Natura, check out the colours and find a supplier



Photo: Courtesy Up Morelli

Up Morelli's cradles are made from fir and hemlock and finished with tung oil.

near you. Soon, the company will also be introducing a line of environmentally-friendly stains.

A Soft Landing is a small business specializing in organic and ethically-produced products for babies including organic cotton items, hemp and bamboo diapering products, soft bamboo and cotton blankets, as well as a "seed" cradle utilizing organic cotton, sustainable wood products and natural rubber for the mattresses.

The bigger ethical picture behind these products,

owner Diane Otterbein says, is as important as what the products are made of.

"Products with positive ions, free of formaldehyde preservatives, milled and produced by hands [of people] who will be paid a fair, living wage," she says. "That's almost as important as the fair trade certification. Not only will the end product be free of toxins and create an environment free of off-gassing and allergens, but think of the woman whose hands picked the cotton without the need for a mask or a yearly CT scan

to check for poisoning from fertilizers and preservatives found in most conventional cotton fields."

Creating a sustainable nursery goes beyond choosing recyclable glass bottles and organic cotton sleepers. Making sure that baby furniture is user-safe and of high quality means it won't be simply thrown away. Buying products using chlorofluorocarbon-free foam made from seed-based oils, biodegradable glues and urea formaldehyde-free wood adhesives is all part of today's responsible parenting decisions. Cravings Baby and Maternity Boutique co-owner Rebecca Simpson says it's important to deal with manufacturers committed to minimizing the negative impact on the environment.

"The majority of our customers are looking for products that will last. Ninety percent of the furniture we sell is multi-functional: cribs that convert to double beds, change tables that can be used in the dining room and glider rockers stylish enough for the living room," says Simpson. "We source out the highest quality of furniture made from managed forests. When we started our company four years ago, it was hard to find sustainable and organic products, and they were expensive. "But now," she says, "environmentally-friendly products

Make the greener choice.



Install a low-volume or dual-flush toilet.

The #1 water saving device is you. Take part in the *Provincial Toilet Replacement Rebate Program* and replace your high-volume toilet with a dual-flush or low-volume model. When you do, the Government of Saskatchewan will give you a \$50 rebate.

gogreensask.ca

goGreen
Government of Saskatchewan

are becoming more mainstream and therefore much more affordable."

Saskatoon artist and woodworker Up Morelli believes a quality handmade piece of baby furniture can be a work of art, but also cuts down on the consumption of resources. He builds his Canadian Standards Association-approved cradles from fir and hemlock.

"These are durable and solid materials that support the longevity of the construction, and I use birch spindles," he says. "Although I can stain the cradles to fit with a customer's wishes, I prefer to leave the wood natural." He uses the aptly-named tung oil as a finish, which is an edible, nut-based oil safe for infants and teething toddlers (as long as there is no nut allergy). "Unlike many cheaply-made store models that are usually built from inferior materials, my cradles are solid wood construction. They are meant to serve a function, but each is a piece of art that can be passed from generation to generation."

Jenelle Diederichs at Mashed Bananas, an online boutique, says her company takes pride in natural products with minimal packaging that are not often thrown

away.

"Every supplier is carefully chosen based upon the safety of their products as much as their style," she says. She points to the Safe Sippy, a stainless steel drinking cup, as just one example among her product lines. "One small step in creating a less toxic world for our children."

Mashed Bananas carries BabyLife Bottles, a brand of glass bottles and teethers free of harmful chemicals like BPA, phthalates, and PVC.

Business decisions about products for baby and the nursery, says Diederichs, can "combine an appreciation for the planet while bringing to our customers fresh and modern products for women, children and the home."

A Soft Landing's Otterbein, also a doula, breastfeeding counselor and mother of four, agrees that taking care of babies also means taking care of their planetary inheritance.

"Sometimes it's hard to believe that one person can make a difference," she says. "But, if I have to make footprints anyway, and I have a choice, why *not* choose the softer, gentler answer?"

KARIN MELBERG SCHWIER

- Basements
- Bathrooms
- Kitchens
- Additions
- Exteriors

EQUINOX

HOME INNOVATIONS

the **eco-option** for inspiring home renovations

tel: (306) 292-0886
fax: (306) 678-4719
equinoxhomes.ca
info@equinoxhomes.ca

- Eco-friendly products
- Demolition recycling
- Low VOC materials
- Energy efficiency
- Support for local charities

OUTSIDE

Use Xeriscape Techniques for an Attractive, Low-Water Landscape

Say the word xeriscape, the latest landscaping design technique that works to minimize the need for water, and some will react with horror at the mere thought that you may want to take away their lovely luscious lawns and beautiful blooming gardens. Today's landscape designers, however, believe that with the right plants and the right tools, you can have the lawn and garden you've always dreamed of, and save on water usage, too. This is an important consideration in Saskatchewan, in light of its long, hot, dry summers.

But with just a few simple steps, says Denise Balcaen, owner of Gardens Four Seasons, a local landscaping design company, you can be well on your way to preparing your outdoor spaces for spring by preparing them for a less-watered summer.

The first step, says Balcaen, is the planning process. Sitting down to plan your landscape, with a professional landscape designer, or with your own pen in hand, will help you maximize your garden's efficiency. Typical things to take into consideration when



Low-water gardens are attractive and low-maintenance.



Photos: Courtesy Gardens Four Seasons

preparing your plan include sun exposure and the water needs of your selected plants.

"By designing your beds to group plants of similar water requirements together," says Balcaen, "You can keep plants with higher wa-

ter needs closer to the house where you can keep an eye on them, and create spaces for plants that don't need as much maintenance or as much water further away from the house."

A design tip that can be taken one step further, says

Balcaen, is to select plants that are native to the area, or otherwise drought-resistant, such as succulents or Yucca plants that can give your garden a tropical feel rather than the desert feel many associate with the xeriscape term.

Before planting these or other plants, says Balcaen, it's important to first amend or add to the soil, to ensure that it's going to be the kind that will help plants to thrive.

"That's very critical. If your soil has enough amendments in it like well-rotted manure, or compost, it can work to hold the moisture at the root level where it's most needed."

Mulch can also work to act as a layer that can hold moisture in, to ensure that lawns, trees, shrubs and plants retain their water when weather is extremely hot and dry.

More than 80% of the water in grass is contained in the blades that are sheared off during mowing. By mulching and returning those blades as a fine covering, water content of the lawn can remain high while roots remain cool.

The same can be said for mulch used on flower, trees and shrubbery beds. Apply organic materials such as straw, peat moss, pine needles or more decorative types such as wood or bark chips at least four inches thick around all your plants.

Interested in Advertising?

25,000
COPIES

LIFE
SPAN

QUALITY

TARGETED

HIGH
END

Call Amanda or Heather at
373-1833

HOME
SASKATOON
magazine

Don't want to miss the next
issue of Saskatoon Home?

DIGITAL
VERSION

HARD
COPY

- **Digital Version**
Saskatoon Home is available as a flipable PDF online.
- **Prefer a hard copy?**
Visit our website to sign up for an email reminder to be notified when each issue of Saskatoon Home will be coming out and where you can get yours.

www.saskatoon-home.ca



A xeriscaped garden can still look lush.

This helps to reduce weeds, evaporation and the erosion of soil, while at the same time, reducing the amount of water used.

When plants and lawns do need water, Balcaen says there are many tips and tools that can be implemented to ensure that as little as possible is used.

Underground sprinkler systems ensure watering is done in the evening, when the sun's heat will not evaporate it; sensors in the soil ensure timers only go off when the soil is dry.

Even old-fashioned rain barrels and cisterns have come back into fashion, as a way to utilize rainwater to irrigate beds and yards on those not-so rainy days.

"There are some really attractive looking ones that have an opening in the top to collect the water from a downspout and a tap at the bottom of the drum to aid in siphoning the water off," says Balcaen. "For example, I helped plan a yard for one client who wanted a number of rain barrels in her yard,

scattered at various sites, that enabled her to do a lot of her watering, by simply attaching soaker hoses to them which allow the water to feed right out to where it was needed."

Watering for long periods once a week, rather than sparse and frequent waterings throughout the week, can also contribute to a more drought-resistance lawn. By watering this way, over time, your water usage will ultimately be reduced, says Balcaen, because, "it will encourage deep root growth, helping roots to become better established and more drought-resistant."

Keeping your garden looking beautiful no longer means you have to use large amounts of water to do so. By utilizing a few of the xeriscaping tips mentioned here, you can ensure your lawn and garden remain lush, attractive, hardy, and low-maintenance, while conserving water and the bill that comes with it.

GAIL JANSEN

BACKWORDS

Montgomery Place:

The Suburb That Sprang from the Second World War

Although we normally think of Nutana, Riversdale, and the present-day downtown area as the original settlements that joined together to form the City of Saskatoon, there are actually two other founding communities: the town of Sutherland, and Montgomery Place, a small finger of suburbia that pokes out into the prairies from Saskatoon's southwestern fringe.

Unlike the others, Montgomery was never formally incorporated. But during the years in which it was outside of Saskatoon, it developed a unique character that exists even today; in the gentle curves of its streets, in its large, beautifully-treed yards, and in the sense of community that has always pervaded it. "This is not Saskatoon," it says, "this is Montgomery."

A Vetted History

Montgomery's origins are unambiguously military. It was created under the authority of the federal Veteran's Land Act of 1942, which allowed returning veterans to apply for grants and 25-year, low-interest loans with which to purchase half-acre

plots of land (acquired by the federal government for this purpose), build houses, and buy livestock. The plots were intended to be large enough so that a man could supplement his regular income through small-scale agricultural pursuits.

Nearly all of the street and park names in Montgomery are associated with the second world war. The area was named for Field Marshall Bernard Law

Montgomery, who led the British army during World War II and commanded all the Allied ground forces in the invasion of Normandy. Street names such as Ortona, Dieppe and Normandy commemorate the places where Canadians fought and died during the war.

The men who served are also memorialized. There is a park named after Lieutenant-Colonel Drayton Walker, the high school history

teacher from City Park Collegiate who commanded the Saskatoon Light Infantry, and streets named for many others, including Lieutenant-Colonel David Currie, the only person born in Saskatchewan (Sutherland, in fact) to win a Victoria Cross. Lancaster Crescent commemorates the mighty Lancaster bombers, and Haida Avenue is named for the Canadian naval destroyer, HMCS Haida.



Photo: Courtesy Saskatchewan Archives Board, Star Phoenix Collection

Clean-up Day in Montgomery, June 17, 1950.



SASKATOON'S SHOPPING DESTINATION

Brianne's Lingerie ■ Caswell's - The Store For Men
 Dr. John S. MacPherson - Dentist ■ Ethos Salon & Spa
 Fashions Sixth Avenue ■ Gentries
 Klassique Designs ■ Merle Norman Cosmetics
 Point Optical ■ SaskTel ■ 2nd Ave. Grill
 Sheila's State of the Art Flowers ■ Tall Girl ■ Bon Appetit
 Gourmet Taste ■ Grandma Lee's Bakery Café

123 2nd Avenue South
665-6120



HOURS: MONDAY - SATURDAY 9:30am - 5:30pm
 OPEN UNTIL 9:00pm THURSDAY

Montgomery was administered by the Soldier Settlement Board and Veterans Land Act (VLA) office in Saskatoon, which opened in 1944. The first task was to put together a block of land for this community-to-be. The planners had hoped to put the development inside city limits, in the area north and east of what is now 33rd Street and Idylwyld Drive, which was at that time mostly undeveloped. The city was not willing to provide the land, however, forcing the VLA to look outside of Saskatoon.

What is now Montgomery had been surveyed and subdivided during the great real estate feeding frenzy of 1909-1913. Well beyond the city limits, and with the nearest river a good mile away, it was given the promising name "River Heights." When the boom went bust, the speculators who owned lots in River Heights (and a great many other places) for the most part simply walked away from them, allowing the land to return to the municipality for non-payment of taxes. (Saskatoon and the rural municipality of Cory acquired title to thousands of lots in this way, something that turned out to be both a curse and a blessing, although few would have seen any silver lining to it in those days).

A Slow and Humble Start

Although it was far out on the city's fringe, the location did have advantages. It was cheap, for one thing. The VLA paid less than \$13,000 for the original 230-acre site. Also, it was close to existing sewer, water and electrical lines which meant it would be relatively inexpensive to service. The city's bus lines only ran as far as the Intercontinental Packers plant at 11th Street and Dundonald, but that was close enough to allow residents reasonably convenient access to transit. But it was rather a long way from Montgomery to anywhere else, and without trees or other amenities, it was "a rather bleak and barren place."

By 1946, the land had been assembled and the old subdivision re-surveyed into the required half-acre lots, with additional space set aside for parks. The first families moved into their homes that summer, and by the end of September, 25 houses were completed.

Life in Montgomery was a little prim-

itive at first. It had "no sewer, no water, no phones, no roads, no street lights." The sewer and water hook-ups weren't finished until late in October. There was no garbage pick up or mail delivery, either. Some essential services – garbage collection for example – were handled by local residents and coordinated by the Montgomery Ratepayers Association for several years.

After the initial settlement, building in Montgomery stalled. In 1951, the VLA decided to allow non-veterans to purchase land there, with an option to subdivide the half-acre properties into smaller lots. Only one lot was sold to a civilian that year, but this appears to have stimulated interest in the area on the part of veterans. Fourteen new homes were built the following year by veterans using VLA funding. Montgomery School opened in 1956, and growth continued throughout the 1950s. By 1960, there were 305 homes in the neighbourhood. Interestingly, before 1952, the City of Saskatoon forbade its employees from living in Montgomery under a policy which required civic employees to live within city limits.

The relationship between Montgomery and Fred Men-

del, owner of the Intercontinental Packers plant that stood on 11th Street West, goes back to the very beginning. Mendel opened his meat-packing business in 1940, in a building that had housed the Marshall's Tractor factory in 1913, and later been the home of the Derby Car Company. Mendel made his cafeteria available to the people of Montgomery for meetings and social events, and for many years, the Montgomery community Christmas party was held there. He supported the community in other ways, and many of the men living in Montgomery also worked at the plant.

Montgomery Joins Saskatoon

In the early 1950s, talks began between Saskatoon and Montgomery over the possibility of amalgamation. The sticking point in negotiations was the tax rate. People in Montgomery were worried that their taxes would skyrocket on account of their large lots. Residents at that time were paying \$46 a year to the RM of Cory! At one point, the Montgomery Ratepayers Association even voted to incorporate as a village. Eventually, the City of Saskatoon, the VLA, and the

Saskatoon's Greener Way to Clean Carpet, Hardfloor, and more!



306-220-5509 | www.cleantechsk.com



FRAMING SALE

Life's a Journey.
Frame Your Souvenirs.



Turning Memories Into Masterpieces™

Located In the Grosvenor Park Centre - #46-2105 8th Street E.
Tel: 306-373-8777 www.saskatoon.framingartcentre.com



DELONIX
RENOVATIONS & CONSTRUCTION

Building our foundation on
Integrity



Services Provided:

- Full Scale Additions & Basement Developments
- Statement Kitchen & Bathroom Renovations
- Custom Decks & Garage Packages

CALL TODAY!
306-341-2184
delonixconstruction@gmail.com
delonixconstruction.com



Photo: Jessica Storozuk

Everything old is new again. This older Montgomery home was updated by its owners, yet retains its retro feel, saluting the historic nature of their neighbourhood. The original hooded orange wood-burning fireplace in the centre of the livingroom was intended to encourage socializing...and still does today.

Ratepayers Association were able to work out a 25-year tax limitation agreement, which eased the pain somewhat (and, as one resident

recalled, "boy, did the rest of the city holler!").

On January 1, 1955, Montgomery officially joined Saskatoon. Taxes still went up

considerably, but not quite as badly as might otherwise have been the case. By the time the tax agreement expired in 1980, many of the large lots had been subdivided into much smaller ones, which, combined with lower assessments because of the lack of sidewalks and curbs, meant that the tax rate hikes were not as bad as many had feared.

Montgomery has grown substantially since 1955. The most recent figures (2007) estimate its population at about 2600 people.

As of the 2006 census, there were 715 dwellings, 670 of them single-family houses. At 624 acres, Montgomery is today more than twice as large as the original VLA area. A surprising number of the original houses survive. The 2006 census shows 25 houses in the area built before 1946. Most of the rest of the houses were built between 1946-1980.

Although very much a part of Saskatoon, Montgomery is still different. It is still perched on the city's fringe. Cut off by Dundonald to the east, it still sticks out like some strange urban thumb, protruding into the countryside beyond. It is isolated on the north by the green space surrounding the Agpro Elevator, and on the south by the CN yards and the green belts that surround them. To the west there is prairie. Montgomery has a comfortable and elegant atmosphere, insulated and inward looking. And, in the words of its earliest residents, it was and continues to be "a great place to raise your kids."

JEFF O'BRIEN

RBC Royal Bank
Mortgages

Dannon Herr
Mobile Mortgage Specialist
Saskatoon

RBC Royal Bank
319 Ludlow Street
Saskatoon, SK S7S 1N6
Tel: 306-281-6233
Fax: 306-955-2846
dannon.herr@rbc.com

Funktional SPACE
Interior Decorating
Furniture and Art Placement
Kitchen and Bath Designer
Colour Consultations
227-3008

FLOORING



KITCHEN



FURNITURE & MUCH MORE



AT DIRECTBUY CLUB, MEMBERS BEAT EVEN THE BEST SALE PRICE!

**CALL NOW FOR YOUR FREE 30-DAY MEMBERSHIP CERTIFICATE,
FREE VISITOR'S PASS AND FREE *INSIDERS GUIDE TO BUYING DIRECT.***

At **DirectBuy Club**, members have found a way to beat even the best sales prices by avoiding the hidden retail markup you pay to the stores. Members access hundreds and hundreds of trusted, top name brands at the direct insider price. **Since 1971**, hundreds of thousands of families have chosen DirectBuy Club's **proven and straight forward approach to buying direct**. If paying less and having more makes sense to you, then you need to attend a DirectBuy Club Open House at your **Saskatoon Club**. **Call or go online today!**



APPLIANCES



HOME FURNISHINGS



LUGGAGE



ELECTRONICS



JEWELRY



GRILLS



866-221-3582 | www.directbuysaskatoon.ca

DIRECT INSIDER PRICES
DirectBuy®
The Home Improvement & Furnishings Club
Saskatoon

Wow!

*Announcing the Grand Opening of our newest
Granite Transformations showroom!*



It's easier than you ever imagined to get the Wow! kitchen you've always wanted. That's the magic of Granite Transformations. It's engineered, measured and built to fit right on top of your old countertop to bring the gorgeous new look of granite to your old kitchen. No messy demolition. And it installs in as little as one day! Call today and experience the Wow! of Granite Transformations yourself.

Call to schedule your free in home consultation today!

2623 B Faithfull Ave., Saskatoon, S7K 5W2 ♦ 306-955-7393



Experience the Wow!

www.granitetransformations.com